

30 October 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

Ann Arbor Velo Club, Inc., a Michigan non-profit corporation, is pleased to support the bicycle safety package before this committee. We strongly urge you to vote in favor of **HB 4185, 4198, 4265, and 5003**. These bills create clear standards for how to safely pass a bicyclist and will improve driver's education in Michigan to put a greater emphasis on bicycle safety.

Ann Arbor Velo Club, Inc., is an organization whose purpose is to train bicyclists to ride safely, especially in groups, and to encourage its members to participate in competitive cycling events that often take place on public roads. It is in our best interests to help ensure a safe riding experience for our members and other cyclists from the general public. We are aware of incidents in which cyclists, while enjoying the sport they love, have been killed or injured by motorists. On a sad note, our organization has and will continue to make contributions to other organizations in memory of those who have lost their lives in such incidents.

Michigan is a laggard when compared to other states in protecting bicyclists, pedestrians, and other vulnerable users of public right-of-ways. The State Office of Highway Safety Planning reports that the number of bicyclists killed on Michigan roads increased an incredible 81% in 2016 over the year before. In addition, they report that nearly 2000 bicyclists were involved in motor vehicle crashes. The bicycle safety package will help prevent such senseless tragedies in the future.

While Michigan lags, Ann Arbor, our namesake city, along with other Michigan cities, is leading the way. We have adopted a five-foot passing ordinance. We have installed new bicycle infrastructure as part of our local road repair program. We have introduced traffic calming measures to enhance safety. Even so, these measures mean little without effective statewide programs. Many drivers on Ann Arbor streets are from other areas and are not aware of local laws – witness the number of drivers ticketed for disobeying the new traffic calming features that require motorists to stop when pedestrians are within a marked crosswalk.

Ann Arbor Velo Club, Inc., is very encouraged at the extensive public support for these bills and the wide bipartisan support among the legislature. Thank you in advance for your leadership in supporting these common sense bills.

Sincerely,

Joseph L. Miessner
Treasurer